

CHILDREN'S INN GALA

HON. NEWT GINGRICH

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 27, 1996

Mr. GINGRICH. Mr. Speaker, the following remarks were made to at the Children's Inn Gala on September 26, 1996. I thought my colleagues would find this touching and inspiring.

Introduction by Mrs. Debbie Dingell: It is my pleasure to introduce Kathy Schwanfelder. Kathy has been a member of the Children's Inn Board of Directors since 1994. She brings something very special to the board, a parent's perspective of how the Inn can best help its guests. Kathy has experienced the Inn first hand. She and her family stayed at the Inn with her daughter Lizzie while Lizzie was being treated at NIH. Kathy can tell you better than I can what the Inn means to her. I just thank Kathy for her tremendous support on the board and her for being here this evening.

Remarks by Mrs. Kathy Schwanfelder: I've wanted to thank the supporters and friends of the children's Inn NIH since 1:00 in the morning of a cold February night 3 years ago. It was the moment my daughter Liz and I walked through the doors—to a cup of tea and a warm bed.

At the same time that I share my gratitude with you I share my grief and the grief of the other families who have passed through the doors of the Inn. A horror surrounds us—a horror that our children are facing life threatening illnesses, that their days and nights are filled with painful medical procedures at a time when they should be filled with birthday parties and that is how I know the Inn—as a home away from home—a place that celebrates life, a place that helped my daughter Lizzie celebrate her short life.

When children are ill, they are isolated—but not at the Inn. Here they are surrounded by others in the same boat. There need be no explanations for bald heads and feeble bodies.

At the Inn my 17 year old could "hang out" with others her age. She was buoyed up by fighters and survivors. She could ask questions about what she was to face next—of people who knew because they had been there.

Meanwhile, I could sit and have a cup of coffee with other parents who were also finding it hard to swallow—who knew my nightmares. No explanations were necessary. At the same time we could smile together at the Children's Inn as we watched our children take a step out of the misery that illness had inflicted on them and play in the playroom, watch a movie together in the family room, play a game in the library or just lounge on the couches and share stories about their friends back home in that other world where some of them would never really return.

I want to thank you for having the vision and the continuing desire to support the Inn. I want you to picture a feeble-faced bald kid saying from her hospital bed up in Building 10: I feel strong enough to go home to the Inn tonight, could we sleep there so I can take a bath in my own bathroom—very important to 17-year-olds—and talk to Victoria and Chris, anyway I promised Marilyn a story next time I see her. And maybe more you could cook me up some nachos. I want you to picture an otherwise so-

phisticated, reserved young lady painting her whole bald head and face orange so she could be a jack-o-lantern at the Inn Halloween party. Picture her folding herself into a cubby in the little kids playhouse because they wanted her to be the mother. Know that when a child is painting her face and playing with others she is taking a break from disease and pain—sunlight shines if only for a moment.

Picture being away from home for your 18th birthday when all your friends are back home shopping for senior prom dresses and instead of moaning and groaning because you've already learned that life can only be lived in the moment because that's all you have, you smile and plan your birthday in the Inn. Your guests include mostly 6-to-10-year-old boys because they happened to be there.

Picture Liz saying to me: I think I've learned everything I know about living in this place. How can we pay them back mom?

Well my precious child—this is the best I can do for you—and for all the children.

TRIBUTE TO YEOMAN FIRST CLASS PETTY OFFICER TIMOTHY JOHN POLLARD

HON. TILLIE K. FOWLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 27, 1996

Mrs. FOWLER. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to pay tribute today to a truly outstanding gentleman: Yeoman First Class Petty Officer Timothy John Pollard, who will soon be completing his assignment as the Office Manager for the Navy's Office of Legislative Affairs in the Rayburn House Office Building. Petty Officer Pollard's professionalism, kindness, and wonderful personality have endeared him to many of us on the Hill, and we shall miss him very much.

A native of Philadelphia, PA, Tim Pollard enlisted in the Navy in 1981. After basic training and Yeoman "A" School, he was assigned to Patrol Squadron 46. In 1985, he was assigned to the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations on the liaison staff for all Joint Chief of Staff matters. In 1989, he was assigned as Leading Petty Officer of the Plans and Exercise Department for the Commander 6th Fleet aboard the USS *Belknap* (CG-26) homeported in Gaeta, Italy.

Returning to Washington, DC, in 1992, Petty Officer Pollard served as Administrative Officer for the Communication Department for the Armed Forces Inaugural Committee. In 1993, he was assigned to the Chief of Naval Personnel, assisting in the initial assignments of women to combatant ships; the transfer of personnel from decommissioned ships; and the reassignment of personnel from numerous fleet ships executing homeport changes.

Petty Officer Pollard reported to the Navy Legislative Affairs Office in November 1994. Since that time, he has efficiently and effectively managed the Rayburn HOB Office, handling countless inquiries relating to naval personnel and assisting in the organization of many Navy orientation trips which have been beneficial to Members and staff alike.

During Tim Pollard's 15-year naval career, he and his family have made many sacrifices for this Nation. I would like to thank them all—Tim, his lovely wife, Veronica, and their three

children, Taviona, Nadia, and Tim, Jr.—for their contributions to the Navy and to our national security. We owe all of our Navy families a great debt of gratitude.

Mr. Speaker, Yeoman First Class Petty Officer Pollard is a great credit to the U.S. Navy and the country he so proudly serves. As he prepares to depart for yet another new challenge, I know that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle join me in wishing him every success, as well as fair winds and following seas always.

REFORM THE AAPCC PAYMENT FORMULA FOR GREATER MEDICARE EQUITY AND FAIRNESS

HON. JIM RAMSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 27, 1996

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, throughout the 104th Congress, many Medicare concerns have been raised that have a significant impact on access to health care throughout Minnesota and ultimately to the health and well-being of our Nation's health care system.

Today, I rise to share some thoughts on an issue which knows no distinct, definable boundary. It is an issue of great importance to Medicare beneficiaries and health care providers in my district—reforming the payment for Medicare risk-based managed care plans.

But, before I delve into my statement, I want to take a moment to salute and thank my good friend and colleague from western Wisconsin, STEVE GUNDERSON. I commend him for his tireless commitment to improving access to and delivery of quality health care in rural communities. During this Congress, as cochair of the Rural Health Care Coalition, STEVE literally took the bull by the horns to respond to a variety of health care issues, especially the need to reform the payment formula for Medicare risk-based managed care plans.

Currently, Medicare payments to risk-based health care plans are calculated on the basis of Medicare spending in each county's fee-for-service section—medical care outside of managed care plans. The variation in the adjusted average per capita cost [AAPCC] formula reflects different utilization of health care services.

Dr. John E. Wennberg, director of the Center for the Evaluative Clinical Studies at the Dartmouth Medical School recently published "The Dartmouth Atlas of Health Care." The Atlas definitely documents that the rates of hospital beds and physicians per 1,000 residents determines how much care Medicare beneficiaries use. Revising the highly variable AAPCC payment formula will result in greater equity for Medicare beneficiaries regardless of where they live, allowing choices among plans and more equitable distribution of out of pocket costs and additional benefit packages.

Because of the need to correct the inequity in the AAPCC payment formula for millions of Medicare beneficiaries, I strongly supported changes to the formula during the Ways and Means Committee consideration of the Medicare Preservation Act. Regrettably, progress may be by this Congress to reform our Medicare Program, including the geographic disparity and inequities in the AAPCC formula, was vetoed by the President.